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*Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Économie Politique.* Publié sous la direction de M. Léon Say et de M. Joseph Chailley. Livraisons 1-3. Paris, Guillaumin, 1890. — Large 8vo, 384 pp.

*Dictionnaire des Finances.* Publié sous la direction de M. Léon Say, par MM. Louis Foyot et A. Lanjalley. Vol. I. Paris, Berger, Levrault & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1883-9. — Large 8vo, 1562 pp.

*L'Économie Sociale. Revue mensuelle* publiée sous la direction de MM. Félix Martin, Émile Cacheux, Georges Hamon et Tarbouriech. Paris, Marchal et Bellard, 1890. — 8vo.

*Bulletin de la Société Française des Habitations à Bon Marché.* Première année. No. 1. Paris, 1890. — 8vo, 88 pp.

This is the age of vast undertakings. Within the last few months no less than three comprehensive cyclopædias in various domains of political economy have been begun in Germany, and one has been announced in England. Now France, not to be outdone, enters the field.

The *Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Économie Politique* is not a new edition of the dictionary edited by Coquelin and Guillaumin almost twenty years ago. It is a completely new work. But it is constructed on very much the same lines, and many of the topics are identical. In the three instalments which have already appeared, we search in vain for any of the adherents of the newer school, represented by the *Revue d'Économie Politique*. We may therefore conclude that the dictionary will be edited on very much the same principles as its predecessor. It is a distinctly French work, intended for French readers. The bibliography even in important articles is confined almost exclusively to French works. The few exceptions, as in the articles by Raffalovich and Bernard, only serve to emphasize the rule. But the essays are characterized throughout by clearness and precision of both thought and language. The promise held out in the introductory circular that a large part of the articles would be devoted to social topics seems to be fairly well kept. Three important subjects are treated in the very first instalment: *Assistance* by Chevallier, *Association* by Hubert Valeroux and *Assurance* by Lacombe. It is surprising to find in the second of these essays so important a work as that of Gierke, *Das Genossenschaftswesen*, entirely overlooked. The work is to be completed in two volumes, of about eighteen instalments, and will of course be valuable to those who desire to keep abreast of French development.

In the *Dictionnaire des Finances*, of which the first volume has just been completed, we have a work of considerably narrower scope. The science of administration has been more nearly perfected in France than elsewhere. Financial administration, in particular, has been

thoroughly studied. As every dictionary of finance must necessarily devote a large proportion of its space to the purely administrative features, a French work possesses many initial advantages. Theory, as we should expect, receives but scant attention. The main stress is laid on a critical presentation of the workings of financial institutions, mainly of France itself. And the articles are for the most part written not by economists widely known outside of France, but by writers whom the title-page describes as "*les principaux fonctionnaires des administrations publiques.*" Some of the articles form veritable treatises in themselves. Such are, *e.g.*, the essay on Banks by Clement Juglar (68 double-column pages), on Budgets by P. Boiteau (220 pages), and on Railroads by Octave Noel (96 pages). But many of the smaller articles, also, are thoroughly well done and give a complete picture of the development and actual condition of French institutions. The student of comparative finance will find the work indispensable. There is one more volume to come.

Among the various associations that met at the Paris exposition one of the most successful was that known as the Congress of Social Economics. As a result of the interest awakened in the questions here considered it was decided to found a monthly journal, devoted entirely to their discussion. *L'Économie Sociale*, as the periodical is called, covers a wide but interesting field, which may be described in short as the relations of laborers to their employers and to each other. Among the chief topics to be studied are accidents, insurance, popular banks, dwellings, sanitary conditions, factory laws, trades unions and labor associations, co-operation and profit-sharing and in short all institutions which tend to improve the condition of the working classes. The scope seems to be very similar to that of the *Arbeiterfreund* in Germany. It is a sign of the times, all the more cheering because the attitude of the old orthodox school has been mainly such as to render the contest between *laissez faire* and socialism sharper in France than anywhere else. The founders of the new review, chiefly statesmen and professors in the law schools, give us their confession of faith in the introductory essay. Two theories of government confront each other, they say, *l'État providence* and *l'État gendarme*; or, as we should put it, the paternal and the police state, socialism and do-nothing-ism. Both these extremes they discard. They declare themselves partisans of individual liberty, and object to the Prussian state socialism; but they maintain that government must interfere wherever private initiative has shown itself incapable of achieving satisfactory results. The social interests are the important ones.

Another outcome of the Paris exposition of social economics was the Congress of Model Dwellings which decided to start a periodical de-

voted solely to its particular interests. The *Bulletin de la Société des Habitations à Bon Marché* proposes to act as the mouthpiece of the reform movements which look to the erection of model tenements and improved dwellings for the working classes. The society is ready to send to any person plans, statutes, models and all other documents or information which may be of use. And while the society itself expects to find its chief field for work in France, the *Bulletin* is to serve as an international medium of communication. The first number of this journal contains among other things a review of the formation of the society, by its president, M. Jules Siegfried, two interesting essays by Jules Simon and Georges Picot on the moral and economic aspect of the question, and a full account of the *cité ouvrière* in Havre. The bulletin will be a welcome addition to the rather scanty periodical literature on the subject.

All over Europe it is fast being recognized that the labor question is the social question *par excellence*. The starting of the *Archiv für soziale Gesetzgebung*, the foundation of *L'Économie Sociale*, and above all the recent rescripts of the German Emperor are pushing the social questions to the forefront. And yet we in the United States are still debating the old, old commercial question. When will people realize that free trade or protection is a matter of very small consequence compared with the momentous problems of the social question? When shall we cease to dissipate our energy in battling about matters of dollars and cents, and turn our efforts to the struggle for manhood and true civilization?

EDWIN R. A. SELIGMAN.

*La Population Française: Histoire de la Population avant 1789 et Démographie de la France comparée a celle des autres nations au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, précédée d'une Introduction sur la Statistique.* Par E. LEVASSEUR. Tome I. Paris, Arthur Rousseau, 1889. — Large octavo, 468 pp.

The distinguished French statistician has combined in this book the results of his profound researches in history and his thorough knowledge of statistics. It may fairly be said to be exhaustive of the subject, and it will at once occupy the position of the authoritative work on the population of France. It differs from similar works for other countries, in being not a mere compilation or handbook of statistics, but a complete body of demographical facts, illumined by all the light which history and science can throw upon them. French lucidity displays itself in most attractive form, while in exhaustiveness the book is almost German. In the second volume, the author proposes to study "Les lois de la population et l'équilibre des nations." This will doubtless be a valuable contribution to political and social science.